

## Message Text

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FOR: IBS/NCA COVERAGE, IBS/PA, IOR/M, IPS

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SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

SOMALIA HONORED ITS HEROIC SOMALI WOMEN ON ITS NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY IN CONJUNCTION WITH LAUNCHING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR ACCORDING TO AN OCTOBER STAR ARTICLE TITLED - "SOMALIA HAS DECIDED THAT SOMALI WOMEN AND MEN SHOULD HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS IN ALL ASPECTS." EXCERPTS FROM SPEECH BY PRESIDENT SIYAD AT CONS STADIUM, MOGADISCIO JANUARY 12, 1975: (BEGIN EXCERPTS) - THIS MASS RALLY HERE THIS AFTERNOON IS TO MARK THE HEROIC ROLE OF SOMALI WOMEN IN THE NATIONAL FIGHT FOR INDEPENDENCE AND PUT US ON EQUAL FOOTING WITH OTHER NATIONS OF THE WORLD...

WE HAVE ALSO GATHERED HERE TO LAUNCH 1975 AS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR SO DESIGNATED BY THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY...

IN CONNECTION WITH THIS I WOULD LIKE TO INFORM YOU THAT THE SRC HAS RACHED THE DECISION THAT SOMALI WOMEN WILL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS WITH THEIR MENFOLK IN ALL ASPECTS - INHERITANCE, MARRIAGE, ETC. ONE BAD OLD PRACTICE WAS TO DISINHERIT THE FEMALE OFFSPRING OF A DECEASED FATHER. FROM NOW ON IF A FATHER LEAVES NO SONS BUT ONLY A DAUGHTER SHE WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO INHERIT THE ENTIRE LEGACY LEFT BY HER FATHER. BESIDES, WHEN

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DIVIDING INHERITED PROPERTY BETWEEN BROTHERS AND SISTERS ONE

USED TO TALK ABOUT QUARTERS, THIRDS AND FIFTHS. NO LONGER WILL THIS BE ALLOWED, EACH GIRL WILL HAVE AN EQUAL SHARE WITH HER BROTHER.

I HOPE THAT THOSE WHO YET ENTERTAIN BACKWARD ATTITUDES WILL JOIN US AND SUPPORT THE EQUALITY OF MAN AND WOMAN ... BY CONSOLIDATING WOMEN'S RIGHTS HERE WE WILL BE SUPPORTING WORLD OPINION ON THE SUBJECT. THERE WILL OF COURSE BE THE DISGRUNTLED FEW SUCH AS THE PSEUDO-RELIGIOUS, THE IGNORANT, THOSE WHO DO NOT RESPECT HUMAN VALUES AND EQUALITY, INDIGENOUS REACTIONARIES AND THEIR COLONIALIST MENTORS WHO CONNIVE FOR FAILURE AND BACKWARDNESS...(END EXCERPTS FROM SPEECH).

(BEGIN EXCERPTS FROM OCTOBER STAR EDITORIAL JAN. 13);  
...THIS GREAT DECISION THAT ADVOCATES THAT OUR WOMEN FOLK WILL FROM NOW ON HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS WITH MEN IS INDEED A GREAT ICTORY, PARTICULARLY FOR THE SOMALI WOMEN, AND THAT DAY WILL BE ONE THEY WILL CHERISH FOR A LONG TIME TO COME. BECAUSE THIS IS THE DAY WHEN SOMALI WOMEN SHED THE CLOADK OF INEQUALITY AND SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP...

LOOKING BACK TO OUR OLD TRADITIONS, WOMEN NEVER THOUGHT OF WOMPETING WITH MEN. IT WAS DUE TO THIS SOCIAL INEQUALITY THAT WOMEN IN SOMALIA LAGGED FAR BEHIND THEIR MENFOLK IN THEIR SOCIO-POLITICAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT. BUT SINCE THE ADVENT OF OUR REVOLUTION OUR WOMEN HAVE PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SOCIALIST SOCIETY.

SOMALI WOMEN ARE FULLY PARTICIPATING IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN AND IN OTHER ASPECTS OF MASS MOBILIZATION. AND NOW THAT THIS HISTORIC DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN IT IS REQUIRED OF SOMALI WOMEN TO RENEW THEIR ENDEAVOR AND EXPAND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION OF THEIR COUNTY.

SOMALIS MUST TODAY DEMONSTRATE THEIR READINESS AND MATURITY FOR TAKING FULL ADVANTAGE OF THIS HISTORIC DECISION. IN FACT WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY RULE THE POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND IDEOLOGICAL AWARENESS OF SOMALI WOMEN HAS BEEN RAISED A LOT. THEY CAN TODAY FULLY COMPREHEND  
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WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS UNJUST...(END OCTOBER STAR EDITORIAL EXCERPTS).  
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